

Cantinovum 2005 US Tour

Introduction

Chamber Choir Cantinovum, one of Finland's best classical vocal ensembles, will appear in several cities in late April and May during their 2005 tour in the United States.

The choir will join the **Festival Choir of Madison** to celebrate Nordic Fest 2005 in Madison and Verona, Wisconsin, a cultural event sponsored by several area cultural organizations and individuals from the University of Wisconsin. In addition, **Cantinovum** will join the **Master Singers of Milwaukee** in New York for a concert in celebration of the anniversary of Finland's national epic poem, *The Kalevala*. The New York concert is presented at the invitation of the Finnish Consulate General in New York, which is organizing the Kalevala celebration.

Chamber Choir Cantinovum will perform one concert in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania vicinity at the historic venue of St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church, Glenside.

Profiles

Chamber Choir Cantinovum www.cantinovum.fi

Established in 1989, **Cantinovum** is renowned for masterly performances of a *cappella* and accompanied choral repertoire from the Renaissance to the modern era. In addition to its concert series in Finland, the choir has performed in Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Estonia and the Netherlands. Cantinovum consistently has earned top awards in national and international choral competitions. In September 1999, the choir won its category in the international Cantate Maasmechelen competition in Belgium, where 25 choirs selected from 80 applicants participated.

Festival Choir of Madison www.festivalchoir.org

Praised as "unsurpassed...for choral refinement and enterprise" (Isthmus 2004), the 36-voice Festival Choir is now in its 32nd season, presenting a four-concert series in Madison, tour concerts throughout the state and abroad. Under the guidance of Artistic Director Eric Townell, the Choir has performed four live-broadcast concerts from the Elvehjem Museum of Art for Wisconsin Public Radio. Together, Eric and the Choir have commissioned, premiered and recorded new music by Stephen Paulus, Jean Belmont, Daron Hagen and Elam Ray Sprenkle. Their recording of Belmont's *Sand County* was broadcast nationwide on the NPR program, "First Art," a broadcast that reached over 650,000 choral music lovers. The Festival Choir regularly collaborates with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, the Wisconsin Brass Quintet and the Oakwood Chamber Players. Their 2003 performance of opera choruses with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra was enthusiastically received by the estimated audience of 20,000 at Concerts on the Square® and was subsequently broadcast by Wisconsin Public Television.

Master Singers of Milwaukee

The Master Singers of Milwaukee is among the very best ensembles of its kind in the Midwest. The 30-member choir, comprising professional singers, music educators and choral conductors, has earned renown for the precision, beauty and emotional power of its performances of advanced choral repertoire from five centuries. The Choir regularly collaborates with the area's finest professional instrumental ensembles and soloists. Together with Music Director Eric Townell, the Master Singers will complete a four-concert subscription series in 2005-2006 and undertake an energetic outreach program encompassing fifteen cities in Wisconsin.

Conductor Rita Varonen

Hungarian-born conductor Rita Varonen has led the Cantinovum Choir since 1993. She studied at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, receiving her Diploma in choral conducting in 1987. In 1996 Rita Varonen received the Finnish Cultural Fund / Harald Andersén award for developing Finnish choral culture. Currently she is a senior lecturer in the Jyväskylä Polytechnic Music Department. Varonen conducts also Jyväskylä Female choir, Harjun Laulu and Campus Cantus.

Conductor Eric Townell www.erictownell.net

Eric Townell is widely renowned as a versatile and dynamic choral, orchestral and operatic conductor. Concurrently Music Director of the Master Singers of Milwaukee and Artistic Director and Conductor of the Festival Choir of Madison, Eric made his European operatic debut conducting *Eugene Onegin* at the Silesian State Opera of the Czech Republic. He has led critically-acclaimed performances with L'Opera Piccola of Chicago, with the Milwaukee, Madison, Lincoln, Hershey, Waukesha, Adrian and Fox Valley (WI) symphony orchestras and with the Hellas Soloists orchestra of Patras, Greece, during their Italian tour. Eric's festival appearances include *Ost-West Musikfest* and *Festival da Bach á Bartók*. Eric earned the Doctorate of Musical Arts at Peabody Conservatory. He has studied with Georg Tintner, Frederik Prausnitz and with Helmuth Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival.

Schedule of Appearances

Cantinovum and the **Festival Choir of Madison** perform a concert of Nordic music, featuring works of Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Estonian and Finnish composers and American composers of Nordic descent, in Madison, Wisconsin on April 30, 2005 at Asbury United Methodist Church, 6101 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53705. Tickets (General admission \$15; students/seniors \$12) are available from the Festival Choir (608) 274-7089. Rita Varonen and Eric Townell will conduct.

Cantinovum and the **Festival Choir of Madison** perform a concert of folk-inspired Nordic music at the Verona Performing Arts Center, Verona High School, Main Street, Verona, Wisconsin. Tickets (General admission \$15; students/seniors \$12) are available from the Festival Choir (608) 274-7089. Rita Varonen and Eric Townell will conduct.

Cantinovum performs a program of sacred and secular Finnish choral works on Wednesday, May 4 at 7:30 P.M. at Saint Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church, 2316 Fairhill Avenue, Glenside, Pennsylvania 19038. General admission by free-will offering. Information: Molly Mahoney, (215) 991-0801. Rita Varonen conducts.

Cantinovum and the **Master Singers of Milwaukee** perform a concert of Finnish choral works based on the Kalevala on Saturday, May 7 at 7:00 P.M. at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 83 Christopher Street, New York, New York 10014. Tickets (\$15 general admission; \$10 students/seniors) are available from St. John's Church (646) 638-4195. Rita Varonen and Eric Townell conduct.